

January 30, 2006

MALTA RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

PURPOSE OF THE BRIEFING DOCUMENT:

The Malta Field Office is starting work on a resource management plan that will cover the lands managed by the Glasgow and Havre field stations and the Malta Field Office. The RMP will direct the long-term management on about 2,420,000 acres of surface and 3,520,000 acres of subsurface within the three office areas. This plan will replace the West HiLine RMP and the Valley-Phillips portion of the Judith-Valley-Phillips RMP.

ISSUES:

Through internal scoping the following issues were identified: oil and gas leasing; energy development; greater sage-grouse, prairie dog, BLM sensitive species, and migratory bird management; and travel management. We expect to expand these issues during scoping.

MAIN DECISION OR MESSAGE:

The Malta Field Office will work collaboratively with the various HiLine communities, tribes, and state and local governments in determining issues and alternatives to address those issues. Scoping meetings are scheduled to start early in FY 07.

BUREAU PERSPECTIVE:

Public interest will be high because of travel management planning, roads opened/closed and game retrieval, and oil and gas leasing in sensitive areas such as in Frenchman Creek and south Blaine, Phillips, and Valley counties where there is extensive sagebrush communities and greater sage-grouse populations.

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